

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ROME 03810 01 OF 02 091736Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----091742Z 089160 /40

P 091605Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3229

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ROME 3810

EXDIS

FOR IO ONLY

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: UN, EAGR, OCON
SUBJ: TENURE OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF WORLD FOOD COUNCIL (WFC)

REF: ROME 3567

SUMMARY: GROUP 77 IN ROME CONTINUES TO TIE THE POSITION OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE WORLD FOOD COUNCIL (WFC) WITH THE QUESTION OF SELECTION OF THE BUREAU OF THE WFC, DESPITE OUR EFFORTS TO DISSOCIATE THE TWO PROBLEMS. GROUP 77 HERE DEFINITELY WANTS A CHANGE IN THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR POST, ALTHOUGH THEY HAVE HEARD AS WE HAVE THAT UN SECRETARY-GENERAL WALDHEIM PLANS TO CONTINUE DR. JOHN HANNAH IN THE POST FOR THE TIME BEING. THEY KNOW THE ORIGINS OF THE ORIGINAL APPOINTMENT--THAT FORMER FAO DIRECTOR-GENERAL BOERMA'S NOMINATION OF SARTAJ AZIZ WAS UNACCEPTABLE TO WALDHEIM BECAUSE AZIZ WAS AN FAO OFFICIAL, AND THAT WALDHEIM'S NOMINATION OF STRONG OF CANADA WAS UNACCEPTABLE TO BOERMA BECAUSE OF HIS HIGH RANK IN THE UN SYSTEM. TO OUR KNOWLEDGE, THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT WAS NOT CONSULTED ABOUT THE HANNAH APPOINTMENT, EXCEPT MOMENTARILY AT THE LAST MOMENT IN NEW YORK. THE UN-PLANNED COINCIDENCE OF THIS APPOINTMENT WITH THAT OF

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AMBASSADOR EDWIN MARTIN TO HEAD THE CONSULTATIVE GROUP ON FOOD INVESTMENT AND PRODUCTION, RAISED THE HACKLES OF GROUP 77, AND LED TO ATTACKS ON DR. HANNAH IN THE 1975 MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL. OBSERVERS HERE BELIEVE THE PERSONAL ANTAGONISM TOWARD DR. HANNAH HAS WORN OFF, AND THAT MOST COUNTRIES HAVE A GOOD REGARD FOR HIM. THERE DOES NOT SEEM TO BE ANY STRONG

SUPPORT FOR A SPECIFIC REPLACEMENT. NONETHELESS, GROUP 77 AS A MATTER OF PRINCIPLE BELIEVES THAT IT IS TIME TO REPLACE HIM. ALTHOUGH THEY KNOW THE HISTORY OF HIS APPOINTMENT, THE TRUTH THAT THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT DID NOT NOMINATE HIM AND HAS HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH HIS EXTENSION OF TENURE REGISTERS ONLY MOMENTARILY AND SKIN-DEEP. THEY ACT AS THOUGH THEY BELIEVE HE IS OUR MAN AND THAT WE HAVE ARRANGED HIS CONTINUATION.

END SUMMARY

1. TO SUMMARIZE RELEVANT HISTORY, THE APPOINTMENT OF DR. JOHN HANNAH AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE WFC WAS ANNOUNCED TO COUNTRY REPRESENTATIVES IN ROME IN EARLY 1975 BY FORMER FAO DIRECTOR-GENERAL BOERMA, WHO WAS UNFRIENDLY TO THE WFC, AT THE SAME TIME HE ANNOUNCED THE APPOINTMENT OF AMBASSADOR MARTIN AS HEAD OF THE CONSULTATIVE GROUP ON FOOD PRODUCTION AND INVESTMENT. EVEN WORSE, NAT KOFSKY (U.S.) OF THE WORLD BANK HAD BEEN DESIGNATED ONE OF THE TWO DEPUTIES TO HANNAH AT THE SAME TIME, BUT NOT ANNOUNCED BY BOERMA. BOERMA'S ANNOUNCEMENT EVOKED A SHARP STATEMENT BY JABATTI OF SIERRA LEONE DEPLORING THE FAILURE TO APPOINT A DEVELOPING COUNTRY OFFICIAL TO ONE OF THE POSTS, AND OTHERS OF GROUP 77 CHIMED IN. THE CRITICISM WAS NOT PERSONALLY OF HANNAH, AND NEVER HAS BEEN. IN THE 1975 SESSION OF THE WFC, SOME OF THE GROUP 77 REPRESENTATIVES MADE SHARP CRITICISMS OF DR. HANNAH, WHICH WAS NOT ALL THAT UNUSUAL BECAUSE IN THEIR IRE
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OF THE MOMENT THEY ALSO CENSURED THE PRESIDENT OF THE WFC, MAREI OF EGYPT. AFTER THAT SESSION, SECRETARY-GENERAL WALDHEIM EXPRESSED HIS CONFIDENCE IN DR. HANNAH, AND SAID HE HAD ASKED HIM TO STAY ON FOR THE REMAINDER OF HIS FULL ONE-YEAR TERM. THIS WAS THE FIRST ANY OF US HAD HEARD OF A TERM OF OFFICE FOR DR. HANNAH. HIS STAFF HERE, TO EASE CRITICISM OF THE APPOINTMENT, HAD INITIALLY ANNOUNCED WITH HIS APPROVAL THAT IT WAS AN QUOTE INTERIM UNQUOTE APPOINTMENT, BUT SHORTLY AFTER HIS ARRIVAL HE ANNOUNCED IT WAS AN QUOTE INDEFINITE UNQUOTE APPOINTMENT. THIS POINT REGISTERED QUICKLY WITH THE GROUP 77.

2. THE RELEVANT POINTS IN RECENT DISCUSSIONS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

(A) IN THE INITIAL INFORMAL DISCUSSION BETWEEN THE CHAIRMAN OF GROUP 77 AND SELECTED DEVELOPED COUNTRY REPRESENTATIVES (REFTEL), THE CHAIRMAN OF GROUP 77

RAISED THE QUESTION OF THE POST OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
IN THE CONTEXT OF THE SELECTION OF THE BUREAU. THE
DEVELOPED COUNTRY REPRESENTATIVES (U.K. AND U.S.)
TOOK THE POSITION THAT THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR POST
WAS A SEPARATE MATTER FROM THAT OF THE BUREAU.
(TECHNICALLY AT LEAST THIS IS INCONTROVERTABLE IN THAT
THE TENURE OF OFFICE, WHATEVER IT IS, WOULD BE DIFFERENT.)
THE GROUP 77 CHAIRMAN DID NOT DEMURE AT THE TIME.

(B) IN A CONVERSATION WITH TWO LEADING MEMBERS OF
GROUP 77 ON MARCH 3, HOWEVER, THE U.S. DEPUTY REPRESENTATIVE TO FAO LEARNED THAT THEY AND OTHERS OF GROUP 77
STRONGLY INSIST ON A CHANGE IN THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
IN RELATION TO THEIR ADVOCACY OF COMPLETE CHANGE IN THE
OFFICERS OF THE BUREAU OF THE WFC. THEY MADE NO CRITICISM OF DR. HANNAH, AND THEY HAD NO CANDIDATE TO PROPOSE
TO REPLACE HIM. THEY ADVOCATED A CHANGE NEARLY AS A
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MATTER OF PRINCIPLE OF COMPLETE CHANGE OF THE OFFICERS
OF THE WFC. HAKIM FROM INDONESIA DID MAKE IT CLEAR

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----091749Z 089229 /42

P 091605Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3230

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 ROME 3810

EXDIS

FOR IO ONLY

THAT WITH TANCO FROM THE PHILIPPINES AS WORLD FOOD
COUNCIL PRESIDENT, AZIZ OF PAKISTAN AND PRESENT DEPUTY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE WORLD FOOD COUNCIL WOULD NOT

BE A CANDIDATE OF THE ASIAN BLOC FOR THE EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR POSITION AND WOULD NOT HAVE GROUP OF 77
SUPPORT.

3. COMMENT: IT IS NOT ONLY WITH DEVELOPING COUNTRIES
BUT ALSO WITH OUR DEVELOPED COUNTRY COLLEAGUES THAT WE
HAVE HAD TO EXPLAIN REPEATEDLY, WITH SHORT AND LIMITED
EFFECT, THAT DR. HANNAH WAS NOT OUR CANDIDATE. HIS
EXCELLENT CHARACTER AND EVIDENT GOOD WILL HAVE SHOWN
THROUGH, AND HE IS NO LONGER CIRTICIZED PERSONALLY
BY ANYONE THAT WE KNOW OF. ACCUSTOMED AS HE WAS TO HEADING
LARGE U.S. ESTABLISHMENTS, HE WAS NOT IDEALLY
SUITED TO HEADING A SMALL SECRETARIAT ENGAGED IN CON-
FERENCE ACTIVITIES. IN HIS RECENT UNDRAMATIC MONTHLY
CONSULTATIONS WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MEMBER COUN-
TRIES OF THE WORLD FOOD COUNCIL, HOWEVER, HE HAS DONE
A MORE THAN WORKMANLIKE JOB. THE PROBLEM OF HIS TENURE
LIES WITH SECRETARY-GENERAL WALDHEIM, WHO HAS NEVER
DEFINED THE TENURE OF THE OOST AND WHO SEEMS NOT TO
REALIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF SONSULTING WITH MEMBER GOVERN-
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MENTS ABOUT THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR POST. IF NOTHING IS
DONE ABOUT THE QUESTION, IT IS QUITE POSSIBLE THAT IT
COULD BE RAISED AS A SERIOUS QUESTION IN THE WORLD
FOOD COUNCIL MEETINGS THIS YEAR.

4. A SECOND CONSIDERATION IN DECIDING ON THE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR POSITION OF THE WORLD FOOD COUNCIL
IS THAT DUE TO THE UNRESTRAINED MANDATE OF THE WFC,
THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR HAS MORE FLEXIBILITY TO CON-
SIDER ITEMS THAN MANY SENIOR POSTS, AND THE U.S.
GOVERNMENT WILL WANT TO HAVE STRONG REPRESENTATION
SOMEWHERE ON THE WFC STAFF. HARRY WALTERS, THE OTHER
AMERICAN, MAY NOT REMAIN LONG. BEAUDRY

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